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ABSTRACT

Social androgyny is explored from the perspective of intrapyschic processes. It was hypothesized that androgynous individuals would exhibit characteristics consistent with a more intrapsychic orientation. The purpose was twofold: to assess the ability of the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) as a measure of social androgyny, and to attempt to demonstrate that androgynous individuals are more oriented toward intrapsychic aspects of their personality. College student volunteers (N=330) completed the BSRI, Tuckman's Interpersonal Topical Inventory and an Intrapsychic Orientation Questionnaire. The results indicate that persons classified as androgynous by the BSRI exhibit characteristics consistent with hypothesized correlates of intrapsychic androgyny. (Author/BMW)

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The Intrapsychic Nature of Androgyny: Integrating the Conscious and the Unconscious

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Introduction

Psychological androgyny, as described by Sandra Bem, is operationally defined by high scores on both the Masculinity and Femininity scales of the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (Bem, 1974). The BSRI was developed by submitting numerous personality characteristics to Stanford undergraduates and asking them to rate each characteristic on desirability for a male (or female) in American society. In this manner, twenty personality characteristics were selected as being desirable for each gender, and having been equated for social desirability, they became the Masculinity and Femininity scales of the BSRI. In completing the BSRI, individuals rate themselves on each characteristic as to how true it is of them; subjects who rate themselves high on both masculine and feminine characteristics are considered androgynous.

This definition of androgyny has been used extensively in sex-role research, in which the aim has appeared to be to demonstrate the importance of androgyny by associating it with positively-valued personality variables, such as flexibility, self-esteem, and other indices of psychological health. The volume of research in this area is evidenced by last year's WPA program and its many presentations focusing on sex-role, and the personal moratorium placed on further publication of sex-role research by the new editor of the Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology (Garfield, 1979). However, this research has been sorely lacking in the area of theoretical orientation; Bem herself has

said, "My hypotheses have derived from no formal theory, but rather from a strong set of intuitions . . ." (1976, p. 49). While such motivation is commendable when it produces pioneering research, a construct such as androgyny is much more useful when it is part of a larger theory.

One theory of androgyny has been proposed by June Singer in her work Androgyny: Towards a new theory of human sexuality (1976). Singer's position is an elaboration and modernization of the views of C.G. Jung, and she presents androgyny as a construct consistent with Jung's personality theory. Jung introduced the concepts of the anima and the animus to explain the feminine and the masculine aspects of the personality, each person possessing both animus and anima. In his essay "Anima and animus" (1953), he explained that the contrasexual aspect of the personality, its expression being personally and socially unacceptable, is repressed, and therefore remains largely unconscious. Singer argues that this repression, maintained through sex-role stereotypes, has limited individual development, and is, for the most part, outdated.

An extension of Jung's theory would suggest that an androgynous sex-role would necessitate the emergence into consciousness of the contrasexual aspect of the personality. Singer makes such an extension when she defines androgyny as "a conscious awareness of the bipolar nature of the human organism, and a conscious orientation towards living a life that is harmonious with the recognition of the potential we all have for flowing between the opposites" (1977). Her theory of sex-role functioning maintians that an androgynous sex-role is achieved through the conscious awareness of this largely unconscious aspect of the person-

ality, and an integration of these properties into a more complete whole.

A distinction between the two above described definitions of androgyny becomes apparent: while Bem focuses on ascribtion to a socially defined set of personality characteristics, Singer speaks of the individual's ability to integrate various aspects of their personality. To preserve this important distinction, I have labeled androgyny as described by Bem as "social androgyny" and as described by Singer as "intrapsychic androgyny".

The purpose of the present study is twofold. First, it is an attempt to assess the ability of the BSRI, as a measure of social androgyny, to serve as an index of intrapsychic androgyny. Also, it attempts to validate Singer's concept of intrapsychic androgyny by demonstrating that androgynous individuals are more oriented towards intrapsychic aspects of their personality.

Method

Subjects

Student volunteers were solicited from five classes at Fresno City College, total N = 330, males = 147, females = 183. Students did not receive credit or other compensation, however, no students in any class declined participation.

Procedure

With the permission of the instructors, the experimenter entered regularly scheduled classes and asked students to participate in a study of "the ideas and attitudes of Fresno City College students". Each subject completed the Bem Sex-Role

Inventory, Tuckman's Interpersonal Topical Inventory, and an Intrapsychic Orientation questionnaire. Subjects were offered and later received feedback as to the nature of the study and the meanings of their individual scores.

Bem Sex-Role Inventory. As described above, the BSRI is a self-report scale designed to measure the extent of an individual's identification with desirable masculine and feminine traits. Subjects are asked to indicate on a 7-point scale the extent to which each characteristic is "true of them". Their mean response to each of twenty Masculinity and Femininity sclae items is computed, and Bem (1976) suggests a four-fold classification system based on the scale medians. Persons whose scores on both scales are above the medians are classified androgynous, persons high on Masculinity and low on Femininity are masculine-typed, persons low on Masculinity and high on Femininity are feminine-typed, and persons whose score on both scales fall below the medians are classified undifferentiated.

Bem had originally used the difference score (Masculinity - Femininity) to classify subjects, but abandoned this for the method described above. This "median-split" procedure allows for the classification as androgynous those individuals who score extremely high on one scale but near the median on the other; this is inconsistent with the notion of intrapsychic androgyny, which is more oriented towards a "balance" of masculinity and femininity. Therefore, the present study employed an alternate method of classification developed by Orlofsky, Aslin & Ginsburg (1977). This method is much like Bem's original

subtractive method, except that subjects scoring below both means (weighted for equal gender size samples) are reclassified undifferentiated. This returns the BSRI scoring system to a form more consistent with the integrative focus of intrapsychic androgyny. In addition, this study classified subjects as positively-typed and negatively-typed rather than masculine- or feminine-typed, this emphasizing deviation from androgyny rather than gender-related characteristics.

Using this classification procedure, subjects who had a difference score less than .43 were classified as androgynous, unless their Masculinity and Femininity scores were both below the weighted means (4.89 and 4.93, respectively). This produced the following percentages of each classification for males and females: androgynous, 27.2 & 19.7; positively-typed, 50.3 & 55.2; negatively-typed, 10.9 & 13.1; and undifferentiated, 11.6 & 12.0.

Interpersonal Topical Inventory. The ITI is an instrument developed by Tuckman (1966) to measure conceptual level. Conceptual level theory, as presented by Schroder, Driver & Streufert (1967), views people as information processors. Individuals engage in two activities in processing sensory input: differentiation and integration. Differentiation refers to the ability to locate stimuli along dimensions, while integration refers to the ability to utilize complex rules to combine these dimensions. Individuals low in differentiating and integrating abilities are said to be concrete, while individuals high in these abilities are said to be abstract. The continuum from abstract to concrete is termed conceptual complexity; the place at which an individual

falls on this continuum, based on their differentiating and integrating abilities, is called their conceptual level.

The ITI contains thirty-six pairs of statements, the subject being forced to choose one statement from each pair. Each statement is designed to be indicative of one of four nodal points along the conceptual complexity continuum. Conceptual level is determined by summing an individual's score for each of the four nodal points; possible scores range from 60 to 120.

Conceptual level was chosen as a variable on the basis of previous research and theoretical consistency. The author, in a study of androgyny and cognitive style (1977), found androgynous and positively-typed individuals to be significantly different in their ascribtion to the cognitive style which Royce (1970) terms Metaphoric. This data is presented in Figure 1. Positively-typed individuals were significantly deficient in their ability to utilize this way of knowing, Royce stating that "the cognitive processes underlying this commitment are of a symbolic-intuitive nature, including both conscious and unconscious aspects" (1970). The results of this study tend to both validate the intrapsychic concept of androgyny and suggest the importance of cognitive variables in androgyny research.

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Garwood, 1964); this variable has been identified by Singer (1977) as a behavioral correlate of intrapsychic androgyny.

Intrapsychic Orientation questionnaire. In order to more directly assess the relationship between androgyny and an orientation towards unconscious processes, a list of twenty-five statements thought to be indicative of an intrapsychic orientation was compiled. For each statement, subjects rated on a scale of 1 (Not at all True) to 4 (Very True) how true it was for them. Ten statements were of a reverse-direction type; higher scores on these statements were less indicative of an intrapsychic orientation.

It should be noted that this questionnaire was exploratory type instrument, and no claims are made for the validity of the statements as an overall scale. Statements were drawn from modifications of items on the Intuitive scales of the Meyers-Briggs and Grey-Wheelwright type indicators, and supplemented by statements of the author's own design.

Results

Figure 2 displays the cell means for the four sex-role classification groups by gender on the dependent variable of conceptual level. An analysis of variance revealed significant main effects for sex-role ($F = 11.59$, $p < .001$) and gender ($F = 17.86$, $p < .001$). Post-hoc analyses showed significant between-group differences in the expected direction: androgynous subjects were higher in conceptual level than positively-typed subjects, this being true for sexes combined and for each sex analyzed separately.

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Insert Figure 2 about here

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Results of the Intrapsychic Orientation questionnaire are presented in Table 1. It can be seen that three of the statements were successful in discriminating between the androgynous and positively-typed groups, and an additional six statements were successful at this task for males but not for femles. This sex difference is also found in the analysis of the total scores: while males and females did not differ significantly on their total scores ($F = .016$, $p > .88$), post-hoc anlysis revealed that androgynous males had significantly higher total scores than positively-typed males, while the same did not occur in the case of the females.

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Insert Table 1 about here

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Discussion

The BSRI appears to have some applicability as a measure of intrapsychic androgyny, especially when subjects are classified by the method described by Azlin et al, which is more theoretically consistent than is the median-split procedure offered by Bem. The results of the present study indicate that persons classified as androgynous by the BSRI and the suggested procedure exhibit characteristics consistent with hypothesized correlates of intrapsychic androgyny.

The study also suggests that Singer's theoretical orientation is a valuable frame of reference for the construct of androgyny. Conceptual level was clearly related to sex-role, as the theory would be inferred to predict. Also, more direct measures of intrapsychic orientation tend to discriminate androgynous from stereotypically sex-roled subjects, further confirming the validity of the construct.

That androgyny is not a unitary concept is demonstrated by the dirrerent response on the basis of gender. Females, overall, scored significantly higher on the variable of conceptual level, and their sex-role was much more difficult to predict on the basis of responses to the Intrapsychic Orientation questionnaire items. Theory would not imply that androgynes are devoid of sex differences. Rather, it would suggest that the integration of the anima with the more unconscious animus (female intrapsychic androgyny) would indeed be qualitatively different from the integration of the animus with the more unconscious anima (male intrapsychic androgyny). Singer herself would go one step further and emphasize the differences within each group, focusing instead on individual potential. The purpose here, however, has been to describe commonalities in order to more empirically validate the orientation.

These results are best viewed as preliminary; significant problems still exist in the measurement of both intrapsychic androgyny, which, as an individualized attribute, resists normative measurement, and intrapsychic orientation, of which self-report is only a hypothesized indicator. With respect to the

latter dificulty, results of the Intrapsychic Orientation questionnaire are currently beign examined through factor analytic techniques. It is hoped that the resultant scale will be even more useful in supporting the initial results presented here. Also, a more personological approach might well be employed in order to more accurately assess sex-role orientation and its importance as a personality variable. Whatever the methods, a more theoretical approach to the concept of androgyny is one which merits further attention.

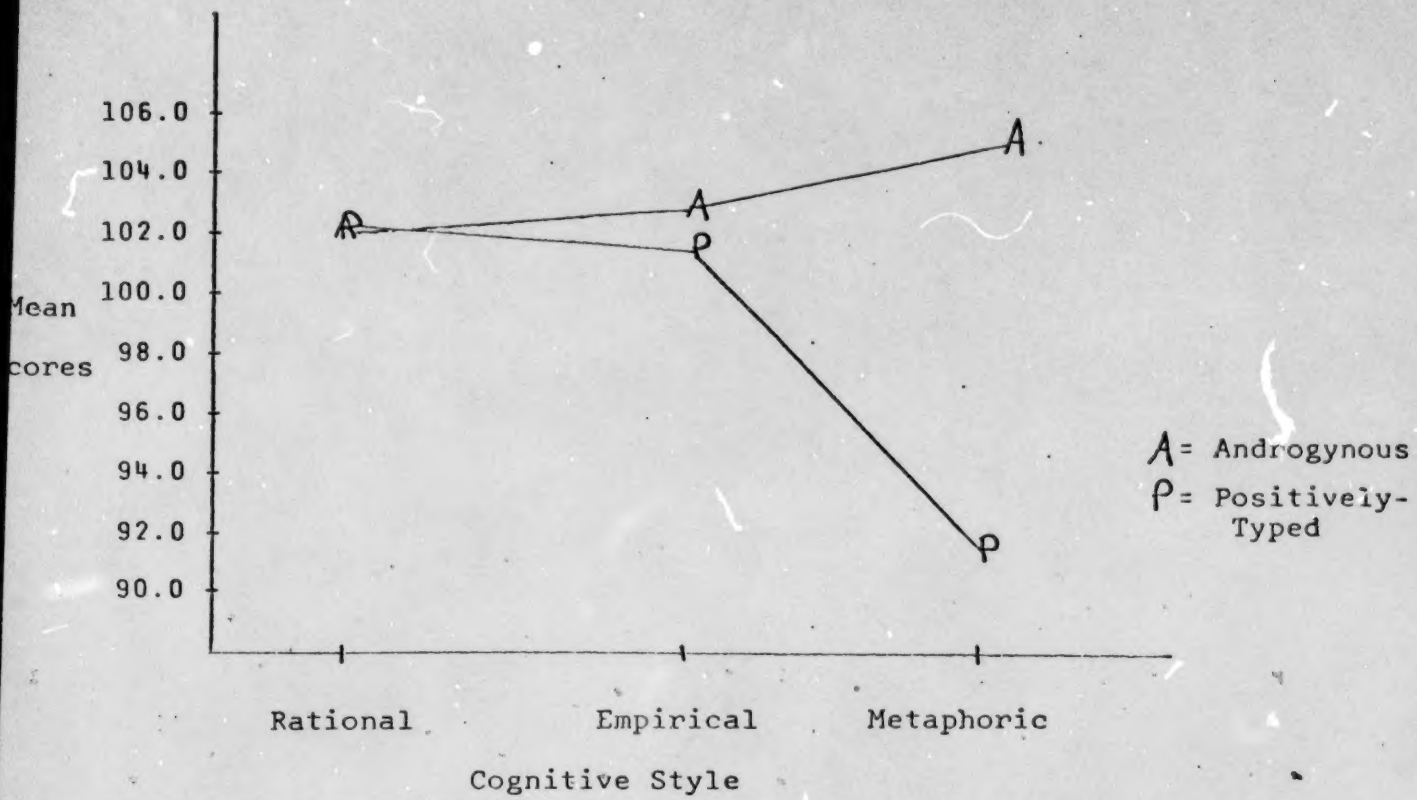

Figure 1. Scores on Royce's Cognitive Style scales for androgynous and positively-typed subjects.

Table 1. Significant items from the Intrapsychic Orientation Questionnaire.

The following statements differentiated ($p < .05$) androgynous and positively-typed subjects:
I would consider myself to be a creative person.
In doing someting many other people do, I'd rather invent a way of my own than do it the accepted way.
Dreams are very important in understanding our lives.
The following statements differentiated ($p < .05$) androgynous and positively-typed males:
I often overlook details because of immediate interests.
Conclusions come to me by immediate inspiration, not by deliberate reasoning.
If money were no object, I'd prefer a vocation on the imaginative side rather than on the useful side.
I'm the kind of person who likes to gaze at the clouds.
*Facts appeal to me more than ideas.
*Once I've formed an opinion, I tend to stick to it.

*Indicate reverse-direction statement

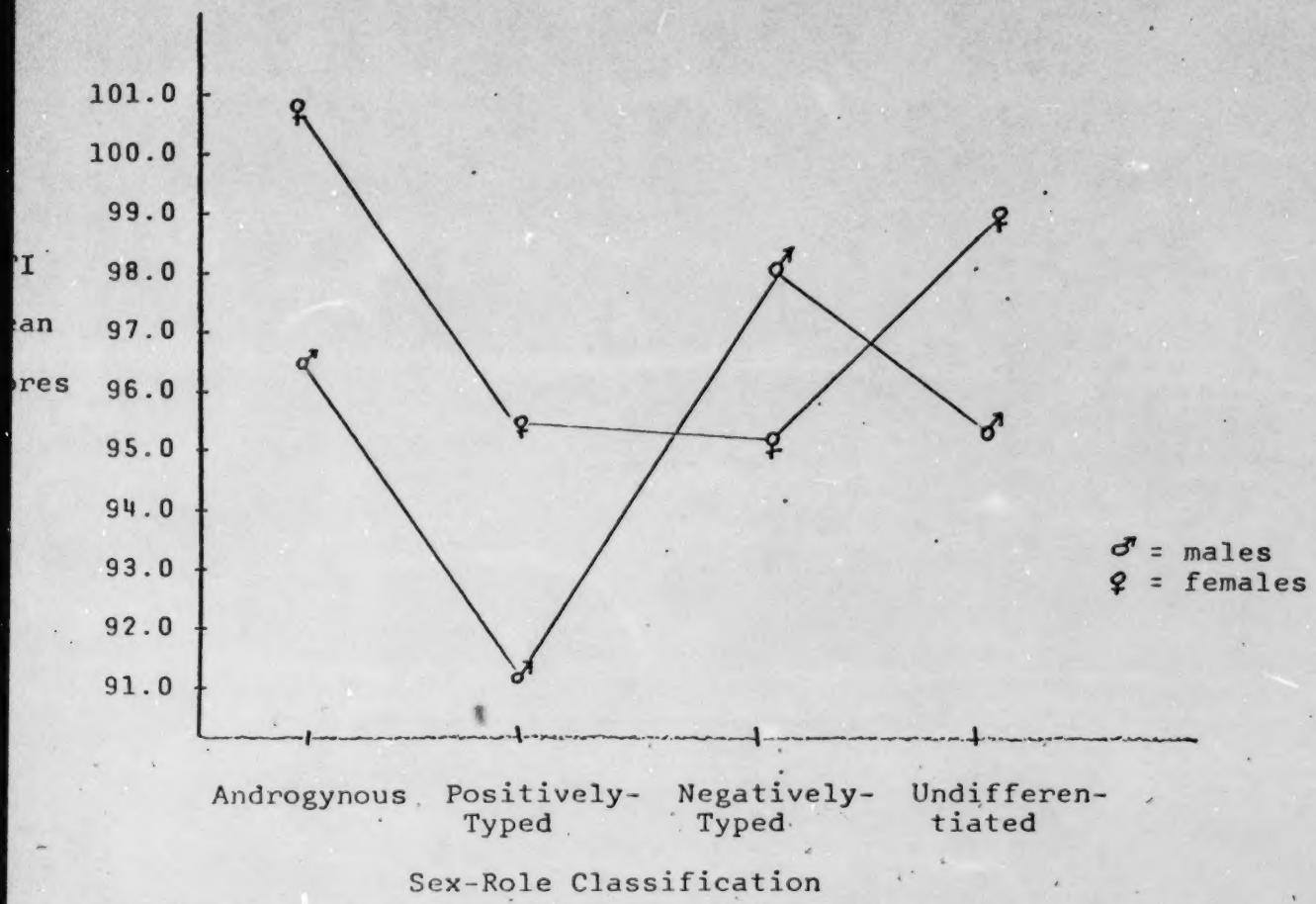

Figure 2. Conceptual level means scores for each cell, gender by sex-role.

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